

It is a great honor for me to be here with the President and Mrs. Museveni. My wife and I like these loan programs very much. And Florence, we thank you for the fine job you did being the leader of this program today. I want to thank Milli Mukyala and Robinah Balidawa, thank you very much for being an example to women, not only throughout Uganda and, indeed, Africa but throughout the world. The United States is proud to support FINCA in these efforts. FINCA now has set up 3,400 banking groups, like the two of which you're a part, in Africa, in Latin America, in the former Soviet Union.

The United States, just in the last 2 years, has increased its support for such programs through our AID program, and now we are making over 2 million loans every year to people just like you—over 2 million. What that means is that women in villages like this all across the world are going to be able to meet the needs of their children, as Milli so eloquently describes, are going to be able to build the economies of their villages. It will make their nations stronger, and they will make the world a better place. So the song you sang today is a song for children everywhere. It's a song for women everywhere. It's a song for the future of the world everywhere. We will continue to support these programs as long as I am President.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to my wife, who introduced me to these programs now over 12 years ago. Twelve years ago she came to me and told me about what was happening in a far away country in Asia—Bangladesh. And she said this could be done everywhere. And you have shown through your media and ours—today you have shown the whole world—what can be done in villages everywhere. So you have done a great service, not only to yourselves and your own children but for women just like you all across the globe. And we thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:07 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Florence Kangolo, master of ceremonies; Milli Mukyala, dairy distribution operator; and Robinah Balidawa, business owner.

Statement on the Attack at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas

March 24, 1998

Like all Americans, Hillary and I are deeply shocked and heartbroken by this afternoon's horrifying events at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

We don't know now and we may never fully understand what could have driven two youths to deliberately shoot into a crowd of their classmates.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families, and the entire Jonesboro community.

NOTE: Two Westside Middle School students, ages 11 and 13, fired on other students during a fire drill, killing four female students and a teacher.

Remarks on Departure from Entebbe, Uganda, and an Exchange With Reporters

March 25, 1998

Jonesboro Incident

The President. Just before I left the hotel this morning, I talked to the Governor of Arkansas and extended my personal condolences and sorrow about the terrible incident in Jonesboro yesterday. I attempted to call the mayor, who is an old friend of mine, but I haven't reached him yet.

I just want to say again how profoundly sad I am and how disturbed I am. I've been thinking about this for the last several hours. This is the third incident in the last few months involving young children and violence in schools, and I'm going to ask the Attorney General to find whatever experts there are in our country on this and try to analyze this terrible tragedy to see whether there are any common elements in this incident and the other two, and whether it indicates any further action on our part.

Today the people in my home State and a town I know very well are grieving. They're suffering losses. And we should focus on that. But I do think in the weeks to come we have to analyze these incidents and see whether

or not we can learn anything that will tell us what we can do to prevent further ones.

Q. Do you have any thoughts about how to stop this? I mean, if you've been thinking about it, anything come to mind, sir?

The President. I don't want to say too much until we have a chance to analyze them. I don't know enough about the facts of this incident. The facts of this incident are just now coming out. I've read, obviously, all the latest wire reports I can get, and frankly I'm not sure I know enough about the other two to draw any conclusions.

I don't want the American people to jump to any conclusions, but when three horrible tragedies like this involving young people who take other people's lives and then in the process destroy their own, we have to see if there are some common elements. And we'll look and do our best to do the right thing.

Q. Do you suspect that there are some common elements, sir?

The President. Well, the circumstances certainly seem to have a lot in common. What we need to know is what's behind the circumstances. As I said, I think that the American people today should send their thoughts, their prayers, their hopes to the people in Jonesboro. But in the weeks ahead, we need to look into this very closely and see what, if anything, we can find. And then if we do find some patterns, we ought to take whatever action seems appropriate.

President's Visit to Rwanda

Q. Your trip to Rwanda, could you give us just a little advance word of what you hope to accomplish there, sir?

The President. Obviously, I hope that my trip there will help to avoid further killing along the ethnic lines and bring the attention of the world to this in a way that will have an impact on ethnic conflicts in other parts of the world. And then I'm going to come back here to the regional meeting that President Museveni has agreed to host, and I hope we'll come out with a statement there that will allow us to make further progress.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. at Entebbe Airport. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Honoring Genocide Survivors in Kigali, Rwanda

March 25, 1998

Thank you, Mr. President. First, let me thank you, Mr. President, and Vice President Kagame, and your wives for making Hillary and me and our delegation feel so welcome. I'd also like to thank the young students who met us and the musicians, the dancers who were outside. I thank especially the survivors of the genocide and those who are working to rebuild your country for spending a little time with us before we came in here.

I have a great delegation of Americans with me, leaders of our Government, leaders of our Congress, distinguished American citizens. We're all very grateful to be here. We thank the diplomatic corps for being here, and the members of the Rwandan Government, and especially the citizens.

I have come today to pay the respects of my Nation to all who suffered and all who perished in the Rwandan genocide. It is my hope that through this trip, in every corner of the world today and tomorrow, their story will be told; that 4 years ago in this beautiful, green, lovely land, a clear and conscious decision was made by those then in power that the peoples of this country would not live side by side in peace.

During the 90 days that began on April 6, in 1994, Rwanda experienced the most extensive slaughter in this blood-filled century we are about to leave—families murdered in their homes, people hunted down as they fled by soldiers and militia, through farmland and woods as if they were animals.

From Kibuye in the west to Kibungo in the east, people gathered seeking refuge in churches by the thousands, in hospitals, in schools. And when they were found, the old and the sick, the women and children alike, they were killed—killed because their identity card said they were Tutsi or because they had a Tutsi parent or because someone thought they looked like a Tutsi or slain, like thousands of Hutus, because they protected Tutsis or would not countenance a policy that sought to wipe out people who just the day before, and for years before, had been their friends and neighbors.